



CONGREGAZIONE  
PER LA DOTTRINA  
DELLA FEDE

00120 Città del Vaticano,  
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

October 20, 2016

PROT. N. [REDACTED]

Dear Brother Andre Marie,

Thank you for your letter of May 26, 2016, with which you respond to the April 15, 2016 letter of this Congregation. With the letter, you submit for the review of this Dicastery a series of observations regarding the principle "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*." Furthermore, you request to meet in person with officials from this Dicastery in order to explain your position more clearly.

In point eight of your observations you state that the articles from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and *Dominus Iesus*, which are constitutive of Catholic teaching on this subject, "have been given different readings that are contrary to one another." You also indicate that it is permissible to hold the position that these articles "contradict what was previously taught." In conclusion, you suggest that these articles do not need to be accepted, under the principle "*Obscura Per Clara Interpretanda Sunt*" and the hermeneutic of continuity. This position that you retain, even after the reception of our April 15 letter, is unacceptable and your request to meet with the officials of this Congregation cannot be granted.

As the Congregation stated in our April 15 letter to you, which the Congregation also shared with Bishop Libasci, the principle "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*" must be interpreted according to the official doctrine of the Church, as it is summarized with clarity in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (#846-#848) and, more in detail, in the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* (#20-#22). The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes that all salvation comes from Christ through the Church, which is the Body of Christ, the Sacrament of Salvation (cf. CCC #846). The paragraph that follows, however, is equally binding, as it considers those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church and states that those too have the possibility of obtaining eternal salvation (cf. CCC #847). This being stated, the Church certainly has a perennial obligation and sacred right to evangelize all men (cf. CCC #848).

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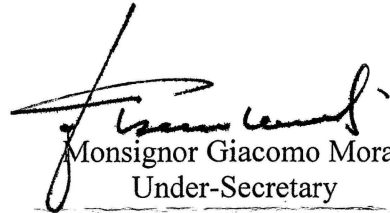
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n the Declaration *Dominus Iesus*, issued by this Congregation in the year 2000, it is reaffirmed that one must hold that the Church is necessary for salvation (cf. #20); that this doctrine must not be set against the universal salvific will of God (cf. #20); that for non-Christians, salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace, which, coming from Christ and communicated by the Holy Spirit, has a relationship with the Church, and is bestowed by God in ways known to God himself (cf. #20-#21); and that dialogue with members of other religions cannot substitute the mission of the Church, called to bring salvation to all (cf. #22).

Please be informed that the Congregation will send a copy of this letter to Bishop Libasci. Furthermore, this letter officially closes the discussion on this matter. The Congregation would like to invite you to pray for the assistance of the Holy Spirit and to seek competent theological counsel, so as to arrive at an understanding of the developed teaching of the Church, and how her teaching is not contradictory.

With cordial regards, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giacomo Morandi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Monsignor Giacomo Morandi  
Under-Secretary